DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 087 492 IR 000 256

AUTHOR	Ettlinger, John R. T.
TITLE	Nation-Wide Rationalization of Acquisition Policies in Canadian College and University Libraries: Are Total World Coverage and Non-duplication of Resources Part of an Impossible Dream?
INSTITUTION	Canadian Association of College and University Libraries, Ottawa (Ontario).
PUB DATE	Jun 73
NOTE	24p.; Paper presented at the CACUL Workshop on Collection Development (Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada, June 16 and 17, 1973); See also IR 000 255 and IR 000 257
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS	Federal Aid; *Library Acquisition; *Library Collections; Library Cooperation; *Library Material Selection; Library Networks; *Library Planning; University Libraries
IDENTIFIERS	Approval Plans; Canada; Farmington Plan

ABSTRACT

Canada has an especially difficult information problem since an enormous proportion of the publications required by Canadian researchers are produced in foreign countries. The attempt to solve this problem by a numerological or Farmington Plan approach is wrong both in theory and practice. This method emphasizes size and discounts selectivity. Library collections should not be evaluated by the quantity of material in a subject field, but rather by the quality of the material. Much published material is simply a restatement of facts or theories already known; therefore, the use potential of material should be considered rather than straight quantity. Several government reports have tried to evaluate Canadian resources but have failed because a more sophisticated breakdown of information is needed. Massive deficiencies and massive unnecessary duplication still exist in Canada partly because of irresponsible use of standing orders and approval plans. Academic libraries cannot be self-sufficient. With federal assistance, collecting responsibilities based on subject breakdowns should be rationally assigned on a regional basis, taking into account the individual strengths of the libraries. (JG)

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to them of the problem of identification, which we have been led to suppose to be the sine qua non of information to the scientist. Scientists are credited with believing that information consists of small specific isolatable entities of pure metal, that may be suitably classified so that they can be instantly retrievable by computing machinery and despatched along the network to a consumer, who may be anywhere but knows exactly what he wants. Let's admit that there is some justification for this view in that the vast majority of scientific publication are intended to ensure that the contributions are factual, non-opinionated, and non-repetitive. Your single-faceted scientist can then handle them easily once they are identified and brought to his attention. He is not primarily concerned about quality, as he will assess the information himself as valid or non-valid; he is not concerned about selectivity, other than the elimination of the irrelevant. The Pierian spring concept is not, then, his cup of tea.

Information, both in this sense and in the "resource"sense of a reservoir of knowledge, has now become the subject of some kind of national stocktaking, though obviously the knowledge, with the sources of the same, will not be more than to a quite small degree a homegrown Canadian product. Unlike some other countries, notably two other English-speaking ones and one French-speaking one, a somewhat arrogant assumption that information grows principally within the national boundaries is just not possible for Canada. 90% and more comes from outside, and consequently a world-wide network of information is in theory far more important for Canada than for them, and perhaps can even be rated as essential for survival, like ecology, social justice and the publishing industry. Now in the current Canadian context,

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outside parameters of the problem may prove to be almost as significant as the substance for a solution of the information puzzle. Firstly, we may relate information to "research", but not to "education", pace the BNA Act. Secondly, financial parameters always make rings round Canadian idealists, and we must talk only about the possible, financially. The kind of cultural nationalism that involves unnecessary or disproportionate expense is not in our national tradition, and blank cheques will not be funded to make it possible. Books, processing and telexes cost much money, and this is said to be a hungry decade. Nevertheless, Canada is not the small or poor country that some would have people believe; leaving aside considerations of mileage it is a medium - sized country with exceptionally large resources and a high standard of living. That means, if librarians and scholars can give convincing arguments to governments about the needs of research and possible solutions, the chances may be quite good that worthwhile plans for important ends will be carried into effect.

Research is a convenient portmanteau word for a number of expensive activities. Strictly speaking, there are large sections of education and large sections of publishing output that cannot by any stretch of the imagination be categorized as research, or even as its raw material. Librarians have been handed a party-line about research. Research is what you do in, with, through, or from a research library, by physical presence or by telecommunication. Research-oriented information is class A information, research libraries are class A libraries, which are prestigious, costly and big. They must gobble enormous quantities of material in order to regurgitate their precious commodity. Their American organization, the Association of Research Libraries, I have been told, requires a union card of a million volumes to join.

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Although I do concede that an arbitrary split between research material and other books useful for the educational process held in university libraries is usually unrealistic, and indeed dangerous - and I shall refer to this matter again - it must be borne in mind that the world-wide blanket orders placed by many large libraries do not in fact bring in a preponderance of research material, rather than "hash and trash", but on the contrary the proportion is the reverse to a depressing percentage. The validity of total world coverage of sources of information as a concept must be considered in the light of its previous history. Since the United States was the first country to give serious attention to it, it is necessary to say a little about the theory and implications of the Farmington Plan. But before proceeding to this, I would like to put up for your consideration what appears to be a basic assumption in the belief of large university librarians and others when dealing with scholarship and research - what I will call the "numbers game". The essence of this is that, if you increase the volume or item count of the holdings in the various areas or libraries considered, as an automatic by-product you must increase the scholarly validity of the collection - that is, the quality. This argument has been used with increasing effect and expense over the last fifteen years. Because it encourages methods of collection which emphasize size and discount selectivity, I believe it to be basically wrong in theory and practice, and that it constitutes a potential disaster, particularly for Canadian libraries.

The classic statement of the theory in the university library field is the celebrated Clapp-Jordan formula, which is reprinted on pages 211-213 of the Downs report, along with other formulae. This has been extremely

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influential in Canada. I do not propose to discuss it in detail; but in brief various factors, varying from the number of faculty members to the number of fields of concentration in undergraduate, masters' and doctoral programmes, are weighted against the number of volumes in the library, control figures being derived from a numerical analysis of existing institutions of admitted excellence. A recent Canadian contribution which criticizes Clapp-Jordan but then presents a formula of its own can be found in an article entitled "The Formula Approach to Library Size; an Empirical Account of its Efficacy in Evaluating Research Libraries" by R. M. MacInnis. (College and Research Libraries, May 1972). I found this unconvincing because it was subject to the same objections as the original.

Whether or not you feel that the numerological approach is valid or invalid or in between, you will need to take it into consideration when reading the relevant Canadian documents on research and libraries, and you should also check whether their authors balance other factors against it to make their assessments. Since the Webster definition states that numerology means the study of the occult signification of numbers, you can presume I am biased against it. I see the flaws in it as follows - I am concerned more with the practical outcome than the logic. As numerology takes no specific account of quality, selection accordingly plays no part in it. Certain classes of material may be excluded by parameters in buying policies, but even where this is intended to help overall quality (as for example, no pamphlets, no juveniles, etc.) this does not constitute selection. Quality is an indefinable factor which

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cannot be expressed statistically in a library situation, but only by human opinion. You may hold that this is not a conclusive objection, and in the practical situation some other factor, such as the level of holdings in closely defined fields, can substitute for, or any rate indicate, quality. Another commonly expressed misconception is that the researcher must be free to draw on all raw materials, good, bad and indifferent, and that everything is potentially useful. This can be called the Harvard heresy, though it died a slow death by compression on or under its native heath during the 1960's.

But large quantities of printed material are in fact useless for research, except that which deals with the production of printed materials in the subject involved. John Miller in his article "The Problem of Fall-out from the Knowledge Explosion" (APLA Bulletin, September 1969) enunciated the "Hash and Trash" theory, which bears on this. "Trash" is the vast undigested mass of ephemera which might just possibly contain that gem of information for which the researcher is searching. "Hash", or rehash, is a restatement of facts or theories already known or made available. Now, in the presence of the original, "Hash" is by definition useless for research. It may be useful for the teaching and learning process, and then the principle of selection becomes operative. "Hash" that does its work badly should be superseded absolutely by "hash" that does the same work better. An enormous percentage of published material is "hash" rather than "trash", if indeed it isn't both. When a large library collects on the basis of publishing output, it inevitably acquires

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a similar proportion of "hash" (against which parameters are no guarantee) which adds to the problems of cost, storage, and cataloguing - the last being regarded as the identification and sorting function that enables information to be fed into a network. The three problems cited can reduce an existing system to impotence. Perhaps selection really is cheaper. Shouldn't Canadian research institutions rather regard the percentage of use-potential, rather than straight quantity, as the necessary criterion in collection building?

Another factor when considering the numerical count in libraries is that of currency. Some "new" sciences and social sciences have developed their methods and interests so fast over recent years that works before a certain date are virtually without importance, except to the historian of the subject. But even very conservative areas like history, English studies and geology have replaced or reprinted a very large proportion of their literature since World War II. Estimating the relationship of o.p. books to actual research needs is a fascinating pursuit. Perhaps in theory, Canada should be developing the biggest o.p. desiderata file in the world, but the consideration of currency should reduce such an ideal system to manageable proportions.

It must be allowed that most acquisition programmes concentrate on current publication, probably an account of staff rather than need, though this also includes the offerings of the reprint firms, who have got to know that they can reprint almost anything without the exercise of quality control, because their standing order customers aren't exercising quality control either. Lists of standing orders in Canadian libraries are difficult to find in printed form, but one from the University of Alberta can be located on pages 77-80 of the Downs Report. It is probably typical of

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those developed by comparable institutions, and indeed the similarity of the contents from the one library to another is cause for grave concern in the light of overall national planning.

The conception of the Farmington plan took place over twenty five years ago.* It was conceived and implemented because it was felt to be in the interests of the United States in a fairly direct way, almost as a piece of para-military necessity in a post-war situation, and the feeling was intensified by the aggressive nature of Soviet technology in the Sputnik era.

If in Canada today bibliographical control is felt to be a national interest, it is obviously in a less combative contingency. I don't think scholars, librarians or government officers see an overriding necessity for intellectual self-sufficiency in a context of national defence. What they are seeking for is considered in terms of definite scientific, cultural or educational requirements - in a word, utility. Consequently, we should be able to apprise the situation dispassionately, in order to benefit from examining the American experience and avoid its difficulties and mistakes.

The Farmington plan comprised a mechanism for book-procurement at the national level of all books of potential value to research workers and scholars. However, such a broad definition of interest could be used to cover a multitude of non-essential sleepers, when they were interpreted, as they were largely, by the vendors who selected them, usually agents abroad who shipped "sight unseen", precluding subsequent individual review with a possibility of rejection. To quote Vosper, "the plan is actually a gigantic, complex, inflexible, blanket order, which attempts to cover all

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* See The Death of the Farmington Plan by Hendrik Edelman (Library Journal, Apr. 15, 1973)

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subjects in many countries with one generalized definition of what is wanted and a uniform list of exclusions".

Let us compare the requirements of the Parry Report in Britain in establishing national bibliographic aims: "All foreign publications likely to be of value to scholars should be readily found in a British library". Before Canadian librarians echo these sentiments, with, of course American and British publications added to their overseas shopping list, they should look at some of the by-products of this "large, costly, and clumsy"system.

I used to work in a New England library of substantial budget and a million or so volumes, which had acquired as its share of the Farmington plan a generous chunk of a modern Romance literature. I don't believe that it was untypical of its size, or lazier than its colleagues, when it could only catalogue a proportion of its Farmington acquisitions without a possibility of its own system breaking down under the strain. Now an uncatalogued item might as well not exist for those who can't physically gain access to the "pending cage". The rationale of the whole plan is destroyed when massive acquisition stultifies the subsequent process of making information known about itself. You can all browse through the entries of the LC-National Union Catalog to examine what does get catalogued and classified. One of my voluntary assignments at Dalhousie is to look through LC proof-slips in the fine and applied arts classifications; my estimate is that by anybody's standards of scholarship, the garbage factor is well in excess of 50%.

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I am not condemning all mass-collecting. To digress a little, the same library I mentioned also acquired North American sheet-music in staggering quantities, usually for free; on one occasion three tons of it from a neighbouring New England institution. The justification was that it was the only library that had an active complete collection policy in a carefully defined field. The results were sifted into three piles of increasing magnitude: cataloguable, alphabetizable, and irrelevant. These items were disposed of accordingly with commendable alacrity by a staff of one retired professor and two student assistants, all part-time. I recall articles about two Canadian university libraries that bought the whole stock of well-known, if not well-picked-over, antiquarian bookshops, more or less by the ton, a defensible procedure depending on the circumstances. I hope they took into consideration (a) the proportion of useful, non-duplicated, books, and (b) the mileage to the next major library specializing in the same areas. I'm sure they did, and the answers were positive. I hope they didn't add them to the library statistics before deciding to catalogue them.

One of my colleagues recently advocated in Library Journal (March 1, 1973) a system of weighing acquisitions instead of counting them. But while avoirdupoirisme may be a joke, numerology may be a menace.

The reaffirmation of national collection policy in the United States in the 1960's can largely be credited to the advocacy of the Association of Research Libraries. From 1960 it was possible to buy library materials in certain countries from "counterpart" U.S. government funds. In 1965 the "National Program of Acquisition and Cataloging", Title II C of the Higher Education Act, permitted world-wide purchases of current library

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material under the auspices of the Library of Congress. This major step forward, which we hope will not be undone under the economies of the present administration, influenced the development of "shared cataloguing" and its connection with MARC. But note a very significant change of emphasis. Wholesale acquisition abroad is now being paired or shared with universal cataloguing - machine-readable cataloguing, as available to Canadians as to Americans, I trust.

How will this affect Canadian collections policy? Now that the existence of subject-classified material can be known, and also its whereabouts, does it mean that criteria of utilization can be applied before acquisition is decided on? Can we now rely on the United States and other cooperating countries to collect information that we can afford to wait a little for? Or does Canadian national interest demand intellectual self-sufficiency with the book in hand on Canadian soil?

Concern in Canada over the efficacy of the total bookstock in its academic and research libraries is by now of quite long standing. The literature that we must take stock of goes back beyond the famous Downs report of 1967 to its predecessors in the humanities and social sciences and in the sciences, the Williams report of 1962 and the Bonn report of 1966. The last item I wish to draw to your attention is a 1973 publication, Quest for the Optimum: Research Policy in the Universities of Canada; the Report of a Commission to Study the Rationalization of University Research. This includes a sub-report on library rationalization. I'll refer to this item as "Quest".

A number of national agencies both private and governmental have been responsible for these documents. Williams was sponsored by the National

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Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges, Downs by its successor, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, as was Quest. Bonn was produced by the National Research Council, and the National Library has published a series of reports still not complete which we shall be looking at in detail.

Some work is ongoing at the provincial level; I would like to be informed more about the Office of Library Coordination of Ontario Universities and its relation to the Standing Committee on Cooperation in Acquisitions of the Ontario Council of University Libraries, and whether the "allocated responsibilities for collection building under development" are penetrating the grass roots of acquisition departments. And someone here may be able to speak about activities in Quebec.

The Downs report was one of a series of such reports made by this skilled and experienced practitioner, aided by a well-organized survey staff and a prominent Canadian steering committee. It sought to give a "broad but detailed picture of Canadian university libraries". In spite of some criticism at the time, that it constituted solid value for a substantial amount of money we can regard as proven by the subsequent use of its findings, and also by the fact that its approach to the problem has been followed by later assessments. Downs remarked that, "there are various approaches to testing the strength of a library's holdings. Among them are (1) quantitative measurements (2) the checking of standard bibliographies and (3) detailed descriptions of collections". John Miller observed: "On closer examination the last sentence should be changed to "Among them are (1) numbers (2) numbers (3) numbers". Where are the assessments of quality and research potential to be found in this report?

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On a swift two-day visit to Dalhousie, the Downs team asked many questions, but a principal method of assessment was quantitative. They measured the shelf list with an inch rule - or maybe it was a centimetre one. That's a good rough and ready measure if you're in a hurry, and I've done it myself. But hasn't this speedy approach got to be followed up by the profession making more detailed studies to prepare a valid assessment of country-wide library resources? Is there much point in repeating a similarly limited performance every few years, without adding more sophisticated and effective methods of examination?

Before passing on to the government reports a glance should be cast at the present services of the National Library to resource rationalization. The National Library does not have the same function as the Library of Congress, the British Museum and the Bibliothèque Nationale - it is not a universal repository. It was never intended to be, although it has extensive collecting interests, and at the present, according to Quest, there is no serious pressure for it to become one. Opinion might change if there was a chance to fund it as a universal depository. The cooperation of other libraries would not appear such a viable alternative as it appears in the present situation if it was found to be at the same cost. The Quest statement may be said to represent official opinion, since the National Librarian was a member of the Task Force that made it. From the start the National Library was planned to be a central clearing house more than a central collection. Its Union Catalogue antedates the Library itself, and I remember its being assembled when I was at Library School. A national union catalogue coupled with

national interlibrary loan forms what old-fashioned librarians might refer to as an information network. Of course, both the above services are immensely strengthened by computerized telecommunication, but others can better speak to that kind of development in the National Library and the National Science Library.

Among the Government pronouncements, a statement by the National Librarian stands about mid-way in our series of documents. M. Guy Sylvestre, in an address given to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and printed in the Canadian Library Journal for November 1969, remarked that the proposal was some twenty years old that the National Library should give leadership in planning the division of responsibility in the acquisition of library materials in special fields. The Williams report had recommended the establishment of an Office of Library Resources, but it did not recommend in favour of a Canadian Farmington plan. The Downs report, however, had re-opened the latter question. The Canada Council had made it plain that the present state of university libraries was a major issue confronting research in the social sciences and humanities; in fact, it constituted a fundamental and most dramatic shortcoming of Canadian research institutions. M. Sylvestre observed that, while extensive duplication is required in basic fields, "We Canadians cannot afford to buy, process, store and make available to the research community strong research collections in virtually all disciplines, unless we agree to avoid the unnecessary duplication of little-used publications. This is the essence and purpose of rationalization, which implies the use of reason."

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He also drew attention to the establishment of the Office of Library Resources within the National Library on January 1, 1968, and stated that its first task was the updating of the former surveys. From that source have subsequently come two series of publications which should be studied in detail by university and college librarians. For convenience's sake, I will call these the blue series and the red series. You should look at both these assessments in the light of your own institutions. Examining both the factual accuracy and the general premises in these documents is important, because they will be referred to by people other than librarians - university administrators, government officers and politicians - who may draw conclusions significant to the libraries concerned.

The blue series - entitled Research Collections in Canadian Libraries was initiated by the late Miss Joan O'Rourke of the National Library. Part 1, Universities, is divided into regional volumes. My observations are based on volume 2, Atlantic Provinces; volume 5, Quebec, was the most recent to appear. The purpose of the set is "to report statistically, by subject, the library collections of the universities offering graduate studies in the social sciences". This is done by using standard descriptor headings and LC classes to provide a detailed breakdown into specific areas. The results prove both the gallantry and the difficulty of the attempt. Mention is made of the problems of the transposition from Dewey to LC, but not of the classification habits of those libraries which have tampered with Dewey and LC in the past and have never managed to get right with the classificatory deities thereafter. Sadly, the collector of the material was not able to oversee the codification of the result. The consequences are evident in the comparative tables which comprise the majority of each

volume. Try to compare the picture given of your library's showing in sample areas with your neighbours'. I looked at Dalhousie and the Maritime libraries and found results so surprising and so unlikely, that grave reservations sprang to mind as to whether the figures were usable, either as a general guide or in particular subject areas. In Scottish history, Dalhousie had no books - or nil returns used - New Brunswick had 46, and Memorial had 305. In a large section of modern English literature, Dalhousie had 10,328 and New Brunswick and Memorial had none. In Canadian literature, Dalhousie had 1,867 and New Brunswick had 5,210. In a general class of Bibliography and Library Science, Dalhousie had 400 and Acadia 1174. Furthermore, some of the figures given varied in four-figure amounts from what we thought we had. Nevertheless, I am convinced that basically this kind of subject breakdown is the right approach to detailed analysis and consequent remedial action. But it would be necessary to draft an elaborate and uniform scheme of general directions; and it would also be necessary for the libraries themselves to do the donkey work on a continuing basis. When we can produce figures in 1975 to show that the University of Haggis has 399 bound monographs on hagiography published since 1960 and the College de Clochmerle has 281, we may be getting somewhere, providing some libraries don't switch to Colon in 1974.

The red series, 1972 imprints edited by Mr. Andre Preibish of the Resources Rationalization Division of the Collections Development Branch of the National Library, includes a preliminary checklist, Cooperation in Libraries in Canada, 1972, which I regret I do not have time to describe, but which you should inspect. He does note that only one case of actual

agreement on sharing responsibilities for building collections in specialized areas or subjects was mentioned to him. His fair comment is "not very encouraging". Collections and Collection Development in Canadian University Libraries, however, must be examined closely because the judgements it makes and the tables it presents will be read by university presidents and granting agencies, who may not have time to refer to the librarians for confirmation of the results. The work has a well-written preface which remarks that "only an appropriate mechanism geared to a continuous monitoring of the changes can keep the data current enough to be relevant". He explains that "in conjunction with the quantitative analysis, an inquiry has been undertaken into such aspects of library work as collections development policies, acquisition priorities" etc., including "physical access to collections". It is the method of this inquiry which is most open to question. An interview questionnaire was designed, incorporating questions on various policies and practices in the process of collection building. Only yes or no questions could be obtained, and it is claimed that this eliminated ambiguity or qualification. The questionnaire blank was turned into rating schedules by assigning numerical values out of a score of a hundred. The results were then translated into the tables which occupy a prominent place in the book; as they are visually presented in building block style, neighbouring institutions can be compared at a glance.

Dalhousie's examination of the questions showed that many of them were shrewdly and appropriately phrased to elicit information and illustrate

policies, but that in many cases yes or no was insufficient. I cannot understand how they could be built up into a viable assessment on a mathematical or percentage basis; but this is quite a different proposition from using them as a aide-memoire for a subsequent interview. Dalhousie did leave blanks until the personal interview occurred, though we did not find out later in what way the blanks were handled statistically. Mr. Preibish visited Dalhousie for most of a day and asked quite searching questions about collection policy and practice, some of which seemed to be directly connected up with the questicnnaire. I was rather relieved that he did not appear to carry a tape measure. I expect many of your institutions had similar experiences, which I should be glad to compare.

The proof of the pudding we found in the appearance of those building blocks. Like the monkey-mother, we though our child was the fairest of them all, but the percentages didn't show it. Furthermore, we knew those other libraries. The "access" rating was a real puzzler. Presumably it meant something to do with physical lay-out and times of opening. Many of you have seen or will soon see the lay-out of the new Dalhousie Library, and hours are comparable with most university libraries on the continent. Leaving aside the sour grapes, in my opinion the value of this report is impaired by:

(1) The question tally with the subsequent interviewing not being a sufficent basis for the judgements made.

(2) The value structure being made up of incompatible elements which were not comparable or cumulatable on a mathematical basis, and consequently the results obtained not being logically comprehensible

as a single entity, however informative they might be in separate units.

(3) Being dangerous to use for uninformed persons.

I think the proper next step for gauging Canadian resources is not to repeat the generalities and approximations understandable in the Downs report and the O'Rourke census, but rather to gather and supply a much more sophisticated breakdown of information.

Subsequent to the publication of M. Sylvestre's address, there have been discussions in depth which related to the methods of acquiring foreign-published material to satisfy Canada's research needs. Since I have no knowledge of these, I obviously cannot equate the proposals discussed to a Canadian Farmington plan. I have only heard that there were strong advocates of wholesale blanket ordering for new publications in various countries, and there was also vocal opposition to that approach.

There is nothing said about this controversial topic in the important statement that you will find in Quest, v. 11, pp 1-17, which can be regarded as stemming from the discussions mentioned above. This report by the AUCC Task Force on Library Rationalization is entitled Library Co-ordination in Canada. Among the recommendations passed on by this group to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada are ones relating to a machine-readable National Union Catalogue, a national inventory of research collections, and the recompensing of libraries for their part in a programme of rationalization and co-operation.

One recommendation struck me as especially significant: "It is recommended that the AUCC urge granting agencies to concentrate their effort in long-term grants to large research collections whether they be

centrally or regionally located". The passages in the text which appear to give support for this recommendation are to my mind somewhat ambiguous, since qualifying comment seems to negate the meaning of the initial statement. Let me quote: "Little or no interest was expressed in, and in some cases there was strong opposition to, any effort on the part of national organizations to arbitrarily designate certain libraries as resource centres, unless such selections were based on existing strong collections located at universities where research was already well established in the fields being chosen. Strength rather than location should be the criterion for choice but the selection of libraries should be done in such a manner as to develop regional resources as far as possible".

This sounds like three different points of view to me; but it does seem that we should be very interested in the notion of "strength", how it is measured and upon what basic data. I don't know whether the major back-up collections are envisaged as the sole assignees of collecting responsibilities and funds, or whether they have any relationship to the constituent members of the recently founded Canadian Association of Research Libraries. There seems to be almost no information about this high-level body available in print to rank-and-file librarians. I share the concern of others about a possible dichotomy in policy and communication between such a group and the other institutions which form part of this CACUL organization. I hope there is someone here who can speak to this, for it may be an academic exercise indeed for us to discuss the present topic if the decisions are to be made above our heads.

There can be no doubt that Canada's problems in assembling a global information pool for its own use is a difficult one, and it is in one sense more complex than that facing the United States. This is because an enormous proportion of the scholarly and general publications required by Canadian researchers are produced in foreign countries, even those in the official languages of the country. Up to now the biggest barrier to an effective solution has been that the sum total of the holdings of the libraries do not add up to a total resource that covers adequately Canada's advanced educational and research needs. This is true whether we are "big-endians" and believe all possible areas must be covered, or whether we are "little-endians" and allow that Canadian interests in research and culture are selective and can be confined to cover certain specialities and needs. A national overall policy expressed in subject terms has not yet been seriously considered and figures hardly at all in the documents referred to. Although Canadian libraries have added very largely to their holdings since the Downs report, there are still massive deficiencies and, less defensibly, massive duplication. The latter has resulted partly but significantly from uncritical and irresponsible use of standing orders and approval plans. Whether the vendors are Canadian or American, this has meant the same books in different places; and in the Canadian situation a book bought unnecessarily means a necessary book is not bought. The counter argument is only partially valid that the research programmes themselves are duplicated - and sometimes they should be duplicated, in accordance with planned regional objectives. The problem has not been one of necessary duplication, but of unnecessary duplication, of waste. Until programme rationalization comes about, the libraries cannot be rationalized because

their first loyalities are to their institutions, and they cannot redirect a substantial proportion of their activity and resources to outside needs, however worthy or patriotic. Unless, of course, they are paid to do so. That is the argument for a limited number of principal research libraries, but it is still more an argument for a central National Library. The expenditure still remains. But in the immediate future when some federal funding is possible, but massive expenditure is out, the problem is not solved by giving up on the regional approach to university libraries. With at least one in each province supported by provincial funding, the interim solution must lie with them, and the permanent solution may lie with them too. Liberal arts colleges, and there are some venerable Canadian universities which truthfully should be put in this category, should be linked with the larger units, federal supplementation being the carrot or the stick to accelerate provincial rationalization. If well-selected, high-level collections are available at the regional level, it becomes much more acceptable for research scholars to go elsewhere than their own institution for certain types of primary source material. It is a question of proportion, of faculty time and of needed books not held. The totally self-sufficient academic library does not exist. A good regional academic library will serve most of the needs of the faculty and graduate students, and even undergraduates if you don't confine them to the reserve room. A line of separation between research materials and other educational material is one of the false issues beclouding the argument. I believe a rationally ordered assignment of responsibilities in collecting for the national interest, based on subject breakdowns and taking into account the individual strength of institutions, is possible.

on a regionally degressive basis - and that it can be achieved with a little help from our friend, the Federal Government. But I don't believe that combination of step-mother and fairy god-mother will sign a blank cheque for the creation of a whole new national library system in this slightly less then liberal decade. My institution was quite content in principle with a previous Federal scheme of aid to libraries, while it lasted. Canada Council grants offered university libraries a chance to build up subject areas that they were unable to do from current allotments. It is true that the grants were given to support new educational programmes and to strengthen existing ones. The coverage could be extended to cover cooperative collection commitments. The Council possesses some machinery to assess library submissions, in the same way it can pass judgement on poets, authors, musicians and miscellaneous cultural operatives, and it certainly paid off to present a reasoned, detailed, brief. I am not sure whether the Canada Council itself or superior lords of the treasury decided to cut out aid to libraries, but the question never was answered as to whether grants for scholars to travel to foreign libraries might not be more effectively spent in strengthening Canadian libraries to meet their research requirements. I am not, of course, suggesting that more direct forms of assistance should not also be made to research libraries outside the educational network. Many research fields are not nor will be Canadian specialities. I see no shame in turning to foreign countries for material in these areas, particularly if world information networks are now reaching the practical stage. Canada is not an island, even intellectually, and never will be.

I would like to conclude by saying that national planning and

national funding are almost useless without the university libraries themselves setting up a viable system of selective acquisition, based on individual choice and aiming at quality. This should involve the abilities and training of their existing staff of professional librarians as subject specialists. I don't believe that ivory-tower research bibliographers, working away from the academic public, can be the solution in Canadian university libraries. Those people were the products of very easy budget years in very large institutions in the United States. Perhaps there is only one university in Canada really big enough to support them. (And anyway, their selections will likely duplicate the standing orders and fill up the o.p. desiderata file.) I am a fanatic in that I believe that, given proper direction in a planned selection system, your library school graduates with B.A.s and B.Sc.s can achieve a high ratio of success. Close collaboration with faculty is vital - a continuous and often scheduled collaboration; and a major or minor in the academic field is a great help. You need one expert, the Assistant Librarian for Collections; but above all you need a high priority being placed on the job by the Chief Librarian and by the institution itself. The responsibility for this cannot be handed over to outsiders on an agency basis. It's because librarians, Chiefs and Indians alike, have surrendered their professional obligation to choose books that university library collections are in a state which gives rise to national concern today.